

Dear Stakeholder:

We are pleased to announce that the **draft 2004 Section 305(b) and 303(d) Surface Water Quality Report** is now available for review and comment on the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) website at www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/swqa. Comments will be accepted until March 15, 2004. Guidance for submitting comments is also included on the website mentioned above.

What is a 305(b) / 303(d) Surface Water Quality Report?

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act [PL92-500, commonly called the Clean Water Act (CWA)], as last reauthorized by the Water Quality Act of 1987, requires each state to submit two surface water quality documents to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) every two years. Section 305(b) of the CWA requires submittal of a report (commonly called the “305(b) Report”), that describes the quality of its surface waters and an analysis of the extent to which all such waters provide for the protection and propagation of a balanced population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife, and allow recreational activities in and on the water.

The second document is typically called the “303(d) List “ which is so named because it is a requirement of Section 303(d) of the CWA. The 303(d) List includes surface waters that are:

- impaired or threatened by a pollutant or pollutant(s),
- not expected to meet water quality standards within a reasonable time even after application of best available technology standards for point sources or best management practices for nonpoint sources and,
- require development and implementation of a comprehensive water quality study (i.e., called a Total Maximum Daily Load or TMDL study) that is designed to meet water quality standards.

Report Format

The 2004 Section 305(b) and 303(d) Surface Water Quality Assessment Report is comprised of the following three volumes:

- Volume 1 – Assessment Methodology and Summaries by Waterbody Type
- Volume 2 – Individual Surface Water Assessments
- Volume 3 – Section 303(d) List

Volume 1 includes the methodology used for making assessments (i.e., the Consolidated Assessment and Listing Methodology or CALM) and a summary of the surface water quality assessment results for each of the following waterbody types:

- Estuaries
- Impoundments
- Lakes and Ponds
- Ocean (within State jurisdiction)
- Rivers and Streams

Volume 2 includes assessment results for each individual surface water or assessment unit (AU). For this assessment cycle, surface waters in New Hampshire were divided into over 5000 individual AUs. Consequently, the list in Volume 2 is quite extensive.

Finally, Volume 3 includes the Section 303(d) List as described above. Together, Volumes 1, 2 and 3 fulfill Section 305(b) and 303(d) reporting requirements.

DES Surface water quality assessment website

As mentioned, Volumes 1, 2, and 3 are all available on the DES Surface Water Quality Assessment website at www.des.state.nh.us/wmb/swqa. The website also includes additional assessment information, lists and maps as well as instructions to assist one with finding assessment information for any waterbody (i.e., assessment unit) of concern. This includes a list sorted by city/town and waterbody name. Knowing the assessment unit number, Volume 2 can be consulted to find assessment results for any waterbody of interest and Volume 3 can be used to determine if the waterbody is on the Section 303(d) list of impaired waters.

We hope you find our report and website informative and useful. Should you have comments, please be sure to submit them in accordance with the guidance provided on the website.

Thank you,

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